

REMARKS

The Office Action dated January 30, 2006, has been received and carefully noted. The following remarks together with the submission of a Terminal Disclaimer are submitted as a full and complete response thereto. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

By the foregoing amendment, claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 16, 25, 26, 97, and 144 have been amended, and new claim 190 has been added. Claims 130-143 have been withdrawn. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-18, 21-129, 144, and 148-190 are currently pending in the present application and subject to examination. Applicants submit that the amendments presented herein are fully supported by the originally filed specification, for example, at least by originally filed claims 2 and 39 of U.S. Patent Application No. 08/336,247, from which the current application depends. Accordingly, Applicants submit that no new matter has been added.

Objection to the Claims

In the Office Action mailed January 30, 2006, the Examiner objected to claims 3-18 and 25-27 as depending from canceled claim 2. Applicants have amended claims 3, 6, 7, 9, 16, 25, and 26 responsive to this rejection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claims 3-18 and 25-27.

Claims 1, 3-18, 21-129, and 148-189 Recite Patentable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 3-15, 20-30, 35-53, 64-77, 80, 86-95, 97-102, 104, 105, 108, 111, 113-114, 117-129, 144, 149-163, 167-176, and 179-189 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sprague et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,247,575,

hereinafter "Sprague") in view of Everhart et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,578,531, hereinafter "Everhart"). Claims 16-18, 31-34, 103, 106-107, 112, and 148 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sprague in view of Everhart as applied above and further in view of Rivest et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,405,829, hereinafter "Rivest"). Claims 57-63, 78-79, 81-82, 116, and 164-166 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sprague in view of Everhart as applied above and further in view of Faber (U.S. Patent No. 4,891,838). Claims 54-56, 83-85, 96, 115, and 177-178 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sprague in view of Everhart as applied above and further in view of Okamoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,625,076, hereinafter "Okamoto"). To the extent these rejections apply to the claims currently pending, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Independent claims 1, 97, and 144 have been modified to incorporate the features of claim 39 of U.S. Patent Application No. 08/336,247, now U.S. Patent No. 5,986,690, to Hendricks (hereinafter "Hendricks '690"). Applicants have filed a Terminal Disclaimer concurrently with this Amendment to avoid any nonstatutory double patenting rejections which may arise over Hendricks '690.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 97, and 144 are allowable over the cited prior art.

As claims 1, 97, and 144 are allowable, Applicants submit that claims 3-18, 21-96, 98-130, and 148-189 are likewise allowable for at least the same reasons claims 1, 97, and 144 are allowable, as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

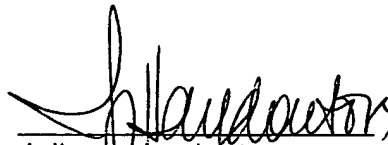
Conclusion

For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now pending recite patentable subject matter. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into better form, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 01-2300, referring to client-matter number 026880-00018.

Respectfully submitted,


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Enclosures: Petition for Extension of Time
Submission of Terminal Disclaimer
Terminal Disclaimer